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TOMPKINS SCHOOL MONOGRAPHS.

NO. 2.

CHILD-STUDY IN THE TOMPKINS SCHOOL,

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## **TOMPKINS SCHOOL MONOGRAPHS.**

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# **CHILD-STUDY IN THE TOMPKINS SCHOOL.**

In this brief sketch I purpose giving some account of the work in child-study at the Tompkins Grammar School, Oakland, California, during the time in which that school has been connected with the Department of Pedagogy in the University of California—January, 1895, to June, 1896. As the writer had these studies in charge and as they were a continuation of his work in South Carolina, he takes the liberty of referring to child-study as carried on in that State.

### **In South Carolina.**

In Marion, South Carolina, January to June, 1894, we worked in this wise: The teachers took a few notes each week on interesting school-incidents, especially those connected with spontaneous doings and sayings of the children; these notes were turned over to the superintendent (the writer), who studied them carefully, comparing them one with another, and made them the text for discussion of various points of character-study, methods, discipline, etc. In this way, many other "notes" came out—the various school-members of a family were compared, the effects of one method (in teaching or in "discipline,") on several children and of several methods on one child were studied; the pedagogical history of troublesome cases was reviewed, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, etc., were agreed upon tentatively. Sometimes the whole hour of the weekly teachers' meeting was spent on one teacher's notes, sometimes on a comparison of similar cases from all the teachers, etc. There was ample discussion. The conclusions were all provisional, and had for their chief effect the stimulation to observation of a more careful kind.

Some of the effects observed: Professor Burnham's opinion was justified, namely, that child-study is "primarily for the teacher, secondarily for the children, incidentally for science."

We found that with untrained teachers the attempt to play at "science," even incidentally, was dangerous. We found that the teachers' interest in the children was stimulated; that their sympathy was thereby increased; that methods tended to connect themselves with careful observation of their character effects on the children; that unity of feeling in the teaching force was helped on; that the work steadily gravitated toward the special study of certain interesting children.

During the next year (1894-5), Mr. Thos. B. Hamby, principal of the white school, continued the work along this line by himself and under very unfavorable conditions. In the same year the writer tried to develop his plan of work at the Tompkins School. For convenience, it will be useful to sketch Mr. Hamby's continuation of the purely empirical plan at Georgetown, South Carolina, where he has been superintendent of schools during the current year.

Superintendent Hamby found that his knowledge of psychology was too scanty to enable him to lead profitable discussions on individual notes or on comparison of a few notes; that the academic psychology of the books had no connection with the practical realities of the school; that so-called special studies and "statistical" studies were pseudo-scientific, even in the hands of bright "Pedagogists." So he carried on the work begun in Marion somewhat in this wise: He found that the teachers were more interested in such practically important topics as "Fatigue" and "Habit;" but instead of having them "specially" study these subjects, he collated all their "spontaneous" notes bearing on, say, habit, invited them to specially observe the manifestations of habit, or the lack of habit, and brought forward rough, practical inductions from the data, to serve as tentative and empirical hypotheses. Moreover, observing the strong tendency toward the concentrated study of certain children, he had the teachers record as many doings and sayings of these children as possible. Much of the study centered about "Heredity" and "Environment." In this work, Mr. Hamby and his teachers used as a guide—to some extent—"Bulletin No. 1, South Carolina Association for the Study of Children," prepared by the writer and used also

in the Tompkins School. Mr. Hamby found that he instinctively reached a "canon" of child-study contained (in substance) in the Bulletin: "Study co-ordinately (1) all things in one or two children, and (2) one or two things in all children." His experience in general bears out the "empirical canons of child-study" appended to this report. He thinks that the teachers are benefited along the lines mentioned in the report on the work in Marion.

#### **In California.**

The work at the Tompkins School began as outlined for Marion and Georgetown, South Carolina. We mention a few additional items:

Many of the first notes were taken under such heads (not necessarily written heads) as these: Discipline, methods, personal (difficulties, successes, failures, "new ideas," etc.), child-study. Thus the child-study had a pedagogical starting point and setting. Some of the teachers wished to pay attention to special studies, such, e. g., as arithmetic, under the head of "Methods." This was not discouraged. They soon changed their attention from the method *per se* to the children as affected by the method. Some of the teachers at first found it pleasant to work together along the same lines. This was allowed, but all agreed that the work was most profitable and interesting when it centered about certain specially marked children. Little "special studies" were suggested by the "spontaneous" material. The Kindergartner, Mrs. Gould, furnished admirable material for "empirical inductions." In no case was a cut-and-dried, child-questioning, blank-filling-out investigation attempted under the direction of the Department. Such attempts were discouraged or, when made, their results were treated as of no moment. When empirical investigations are made, whether by the "statistical method" or some other, one must at least be sure that the data are spontaneous and therefore approximately reliable.

Two needs came to us early in this year's work: 1. The need of finding out the motives that influenced children's actions. 2. The need of some system of classification based upon philosophically accurate principles. We collected chil-

dren's spontaneous questions, their formal questions, their explanations of the needs underlying their questions, etc., etc. They easily grouped themselves under the rough classification of "Instincts" given in the South Carolina Bulletin; but a closer and more psychological classification was wanted. Appended to this report will be found a table of "Needs and Instincts" finally worked out by the writer as a tentative, though rationally and empirically based, scheme of classification. A brief explanation of the principles underlying this classification is necessary, for the table of "Instincts" has enabled us to combine, in a measure, empirical investigation by means of observation, experiment, and verification, with a more or less rational explanation of character by means of hypothesis. Before the table was used, it was subjected to criticism by the teachers using it, by the Graduate Seminary for the Study of Child-life (University of California), and by the graduate students in the writer's classes. The starting point of the table is the list of instincts (instinctive or intuitive tendencies) laid down in the South Carolina Bulletin. This was interpreted in terms of the theory of development: 1. Development proceeds by differentiation and integration. 2. Development proceeds from the fundamental to the accessory. Thus the Biological Instincts are regarded as differentiating into the Psychical (or Individual) and the Social. These are integrated into the Æsthetical Instincts, whose *differentia*, however, is not derived from the lower instincts. Rather, the Æsthetical (Theological, Philosophical, and Artistic) Instincts integrate the lower instincts, and differentiate (along the lines of Religion, Philosophy, and Art) into Logical and Ethical Instincts. These in turn are integrated with the other instincts and with each other into unitary character. The Instincts, therefore, stand for large character-tendencies. They, therefore, should admit of a psychological cross-classification. At bottom our psychical activities are statical and dynamical, analogous to nerve-action and muscle-action, phenomenally felt as "thought" and "striving." But "thought" has a "content" side (stuff), and a "relation" side which is the essence



of thought in the narrow sense. So "striving" has an outgoing side and an incoming side. Therefore, the general psychical scheme ought to be :

Thought: 1. Content or Fact. 2. Relation.

Striving: 1. Impulse (out-going muscularity). 2. Affect (crude stuff of "emotion").

After working on this scheme awhile, we found that it was analogous to Preyer's empirical classification of movements, and that it represented the attitude of Psychology, "Old," "New," "Empirical" and "Rational." We have found it to be of great practical use, although it is probable that the teachers could have made no use of it if they had worked without instruction extending over the most of a year. What the scheme needs is severe criticism, practical and theoretical; although it has thus far stood both kinds of test and is therefore tentatively put forward at this time.

We have become convinced that Embryology must furnish the most important hints as to method in child-study; and therefore the *whole child* in the organic connection of its parts, bodily and mental, inherited and environmental, must be studied by the aid of all science and all philosophy, by groups of people, or by single individuals—if there be any such—who combine scientific and philosophical training and insight with practical experience and intuition. It seems to us that on the one hand, the raw philosopher or man of science will miss the "feel" of reality, or on the other, the empiricist will heap up veriest and direst nonsense, *unless* he contents himself with being a pedagogical naturalist.

The appendices to this very crude report will represent in skeleton outline the contributions of the Tompkins School to the empirical and rational sides respectively of child-study.

#### APPENDIX A.

##### Empirical Child-Study Canons.

1. There is no essential identity of character possible. The study of individuals may teach us what combinations of traits may occur empirically. The study of groups may teach us what effects similarities of heredity and environment may produce.

2. A number of indications, under varying conditions, must point the same way, if our empirical inductions are to be useful.

3. In character-study, many-sidedness in the study of individuals is safer than a one-sided study of groups: for the individual, and the individual only, is a unitary monad reflecting the whole universe from his own peculiar standpoint (Leibnitz).

4. We have no right to declare empirical inductions unless observation of children's spontaneous doings, and sayings interpreted by doings, corroborate our conclusions.

5. The naturalist must precede the specialist.

6. The philosopher of scientific training, sympathy, and power must guide the naturalist and specialist.

7. Genetic Psychology is the key to Child-study, and Comparative Psychology is the key to Psychogenesis.

8. The results and methods of all the sciences and of all philosophy must be brought to bear on child-study.

9. Observation, experiment, and verification, used comparatively, and guided by the hypothesis of Biological Analogy, constitute the method of child-study.

10. We must expect to find the common principles of humanity in the *Æsthetical*, *Logical*, and *Ethical* Instincts. We are to search for these amid the environment- and heredity-produced and infinitely varying *Animal* Instincts (the *Biological*, the *Psychical*, the *Social*), which in man always show the traces of *human* activity.

11. Study successively, and as each step is taken, co-ordinately: 1. Whatsoever most interests you in your school-experience as recorded in your notes. 2. Whatsoever most interests you in the children's recorded "doings and sayings." 3. All things in one or two children. 4. One or two things in all children.

## APPENDIX B.

### Needs and Instincts.

#### I. BIOLOGICAL:

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Nutriment,   | 2. Metabolism, |
| 3. Spontaneity, | 4. Tonicity.   |



II. PSYCHICAL:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Fact,    | 2. Relation, |
| 3. Impulse, | 4. Affect.   |

III. SOCIAL:

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Company,      | 2. Relationship,   |
| 3. Co-operation, | 4. Fellow-feeling. |

IV. ÆSTHETICAL:

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Reality,   | 2. Harmony, |
| 3. Imitation, | 4. Beauty.  |

V. LOGICAL:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Knowledge, | 2. Correlation, |
| 3. Reasoning, | 4. Continuity,  |

VI. ETHICAL:

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Duty,    | 2. Equity,   |
| 3. Charity, | 4. Goodness. |

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